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# Special Building Line Block Instructions

According to

Section 42-163 of Chapter 42 of the Code of Ordinances



**PLANNING &  
DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT**

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*This packet includes:*

- a **Special Building Line Block (SBLB) Application**
- a blank **Petition** to be signed by applicant
- a blank **Evidence of Support** from property owners within the boundary,
- a blank **Deed Restriction Statement**,
- a sample **Building Line Calculation**
- a sample **Notification Sign**
- a sample map

In order to qualify as a SMLSB, an area must:

- contain at least 1 blockface, but not more than two opposing blockfaces;
- contain all lots on each blockface;
- form a contiguous area;
- have at least 60% of the lots developed for or restricted to single-family use (exclusive of land used for a park, library, place of worship, or school); and
- contain at least one lot that does not have a minimum building line established by deed restrictions.

**An applicant must meet with City staff prior to submitting an application.** A complete application must include all items required as submittal requirements on the application. A complete application package must be mailed or hand-delivered during standard business hours to:

**Planning and Development Department, Community Sustainability Division**

**Attn: Kevin Calfee**

**611 Walker, 6th Floor**

**Houston, TX 77002**

In order for the City Council to designate a SMLSB, it must determine:

- the area has identifiable lot-size character;
- that by establishing the Special Minimum Building Line Block, the identifiable building line character of the area will be preserved;
- there is sufficient support by the property owners; and
- the application meets the Submittal Requirement identified by Item 4 on the application and the minimum eligibility criteria identified above.

Contact Kevin Calfee at 713-837-7701 or [Kevin.Calfee@HoustonTX.gov](mailto:Kevin.Calfee@HoustonTX.gov) with any questions or to schedule a meeting prior to submitting an application. More information can be found on [www.houstonplanning.com](http://www.houstonplanning.com).

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# Special Building Line Block Application Steps

## **Step 1: Meet with Staff of the Planning & Development Department**

The applicant must meet with Planning & Development Department staff before submitting an application. To schedule a pre-submittal meeting, please contact Kevin Calfee at (713) 837-7701 or via email at [Kevin.Calfee@HoustonTX.gov](mailto:Kevin.Calfee@HoustonTX.gov).

## **Step 2: Submit a Complete Application**

The complete application package must be mailed or hand-delivered during standard business hours to the Planning & Development Department. Once the application is submitted, the Planning Department will confirm its receipt to the applicant. If the application is determined to be incomplete, it will be returned with an explanation of what is needed to make it complete.

## **Step 3: Post Notification Signs**

The applicant must post the required signs within the area immediately upon notification.

## **Step 4: 30-Day protest Period**

Within 15 days of receiving a complete application, the Planning & Development Department will send notification to property owners within the proposed boundaries, as well as the District Council Member. The notifications will include instructions on how property owners may object to this designation. Any objections must be made in writing within 30 days of the date of the notice.

## **Step 5: Department Review of Protest Responses**

At the end of the thirty days, one of the following actions will occur:

- the application will be sent to the City Council if it has at least 51% support with no protests; or
- the application will be sent to the Planning Commission for a public hearing if:
  - a) it has at least 51% support and has received protests, or
  - b) it has less than 51% support but has received no protests.

A notification letter will be sent to property owners no less than 15 days before the hearing date. Applications recommended for approval by the Commission will be forwarded on to City Council. Applications denied by the Commission will not be forward to City Council.

## **Step 6: Attend the Planning Commission Public Hearing (optional)**

Members of the public may present comments at the public hearing. After the public hearing, the Commission shall consider whether to recommend that the City Council establish the designation.

If the Commission decides to recommend that the City Council establish the designation, the Director shall refer the application to the City Council. Should the Commission deny the application, the decision of the Commission shall be final.

## **Step 7: City Council Action (optional)**

City Council will consider all applications that are approved by the Planning Commission. City Council action to approve or deny the designation is final.

Persons wanting to address City Council during the Public Speaking portion of the meeting should contact the City Secretary at (832) 393-1100 or [citysecretary@houstontx.gov](mailto:citysecretary@houstontx.gov)

# Special Building Line Block Application

According to  
Section 42-163 of Chapter 42 of the Code of Ordinances



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Please complete entire application form.

## 1. Location:

### General Location:

Example: North side of Golden Retriever Drive between Boxer and Schnauzer Streets

### Specific Legal Description

Example: Blocks 15, Lots 1-5, in Cocker Spaniel Subdivision

## 2. Contacts:

Primary  
Applicant

Phone #

Address

E-mail

City

State

Zip

Alternate  
Applicant

Phone #

Address

E-mail

City

State

Zip

## 3. Project Information (Staff Use Only-Do Not Fill In):

File #

Key Map #

TIRZ

Lambert #

Super N'hood

Census Tract

City Council District

## 4. Submittal Requirements:

### Please Check

Completed application form (this page)

☐

Petition signed by the applicant (page 5)

☐

Evidence of support from the property owners within the boundary (page 6)

☐

Signed deed restriction statement (page 6)

☐

Copy of deed restrictions, if applicable

☐

Map or sketch showing the address, land use and the size of all lots within boundary area

☐

Data showing the distance from the front property line to each building (page XX)

☐

A survey from at least one block included in the application (more than one is preferable)

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## Special Building Line Block

*Applicant Petition*



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(Date)\_\_\_\_\_

I, *(name of petitioner)*\_\_\_\_\_, owner of property within the proposed boundaries of the Special Minimum Building Line Block, specifically, *(Block)*\_\_\_\_\_, *(Lot)*\_\_\_\_\_ of *(name of subdivision)*\_\_\_\_\_, do hereby submit this petition as prescribed by the Code of Ordinances, City of Houston, Sections 42-194. With this petition and other required information, I request to preserve the character of the existing building lines for the following area through the application of and creation of a Special Minimum Building Line Block.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Example: Blocks 15 - 19, Lots 1-37, in Cocker Spaniel Subdivision

(Signature of petitioner)\_\_\_\_\_

(Printed name of petitioner)\_\_\_\_\_

# Special Building Line Block

Evidence of Support



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Listed below is evidence by the owners of property, or their authorized agent, within the proposed boundary of the Special Minimum Building Line Block who support the request to preserve the character of the existing building lines for the area that follows through the application and creation of a Special Minimum Building Line Block.

Example: Lots 1-37, Block 15, in Cocker Spaniel Subdivision

A Special Building Line Block is determined by finding the current constructed building line that represents a minimum standard for at least 70% of the structures in the proposed area (60% in city designated historic districts). The application data identifies building setbacks ranging from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ feet. The Planning and Development Department will perform the calculations to determine the Special Building Line Block.

The Special Building Line Block (SBLB) may only be adopted by City Council by passage of an ordinance.

By signing this evidence of support, I hereby represent: (1) that I am the lot owner or the lot owner's authorized agent of the property with respect to which I have affixed my signature, and (2) I support the petition of *(Name of Petitioner)* \_\_\_\_\_ to create a Special Building Line Block for *(Block)* \_\_\_\_\_, *(Lot)* \_\_\_\_\_ in *(Name of Subdivision)* \_\_\_\_\_.

|                        |                 |                   |
|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <b>Print Name:</b>     | <b>Address:</b> |                   |
| <b>Signature:</b><br>X | <b>Date:</b>    | <b>Telephone:</b> |
| <b>Print Name:</b>     | <b>Address:</b> |                   |
| <b>Signature:</b><br>X | <b>Date:</b>    | <b>Telephone:</b> |
| <b>Print Name:</b>     | <b>Address:</b> |                   |
| <b>Signature:</b><br>X | <b>Date:</b>    | <b>Telephone:</b> |
| <b>Print Name:</b>     | <b>Address:</b> |                   |
| <b>Signature:</b><br>X | <b>Date:</b>    | <b>Telephone:</b> |

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## Special Building Line Block

*Deed Restrictions Statement*



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I have personal knowledge of the facts set forth in this deed restriction statement, each of which is true and correct.

Initial (1), (2), or (3) as applicable:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ All properties in the proposed Special Minimum Building Line Block do not have deed restrictions.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ All of the properties have deed restrictions; however, the deed restrictions do not address minimum building line (attach copy of Deed Restrictions).
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Some, but not all, of the properties have deed restrictions (attach copy of Deed Restrictions).

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*Applicant's Signature*

*Date*

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*Applicant's Printed Name*

*Address*

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## Special Building Line Block

### Building Line Sample Calculation

| <i><b>Building Line Rank</b></i>   | <i><b>Address</b></i> | <i><b>B.L. in feet</b></i> | <i><b>Building Line Calculation</b></i> |       |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------------|---|-------|
| 1  | 1611 Dachshund        | 23                         | Total number of improved lots           | 7     |
| 2  | 1603 Dachshund        | 20                         |   |       |
| 3  | 1613 Dachshund        | 18                         | Multiplied by 0.7 (70%)                 | x 0.7 |
| 4  | 1607 Dachshund        | 18                         | Equals                                  | 4.9   |
| 5  | 1609 Dachshund        | 18                         |   |       |
| 6  | 1601 Dachshund        | 15                         | Rounds up to building rank #            | 5     |
| 7  | 1605 Dachshund        | 13                         |   |       |
| <b><i>The fifth largest building line in this example is 18 feet. This would be the new Special Building Line for this street.</i></b> |                       |                            |   |       |

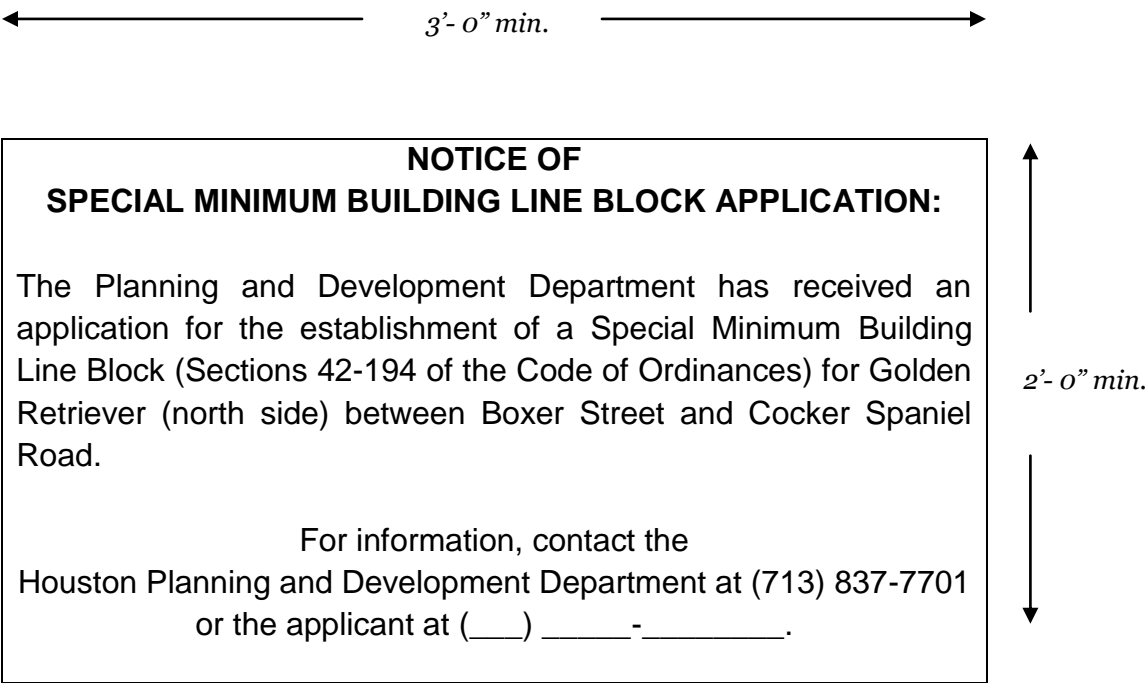
The City calculates the special building line by using the following steps:

- 1) Listing the building lines in order of largest to smallest;
- 2) Ranking the building lines assigning the number 1 to the largest building line, the number 2 to the second largest, etc;
- 3) Multiplying the number of single-family improved lots (building line rank) by .7 (70 percent) or .6 (60 percent for applications in city designated historic districts), to obtain the building rank number of the special building line (if necessary, round up);
- 4) Using the list from step 2, match the building rank number result from step 3 with the corresponding building line; and
- 5) This building line is the special building line.

# Special Minimum Building Line Block

## Sample Notification Sign

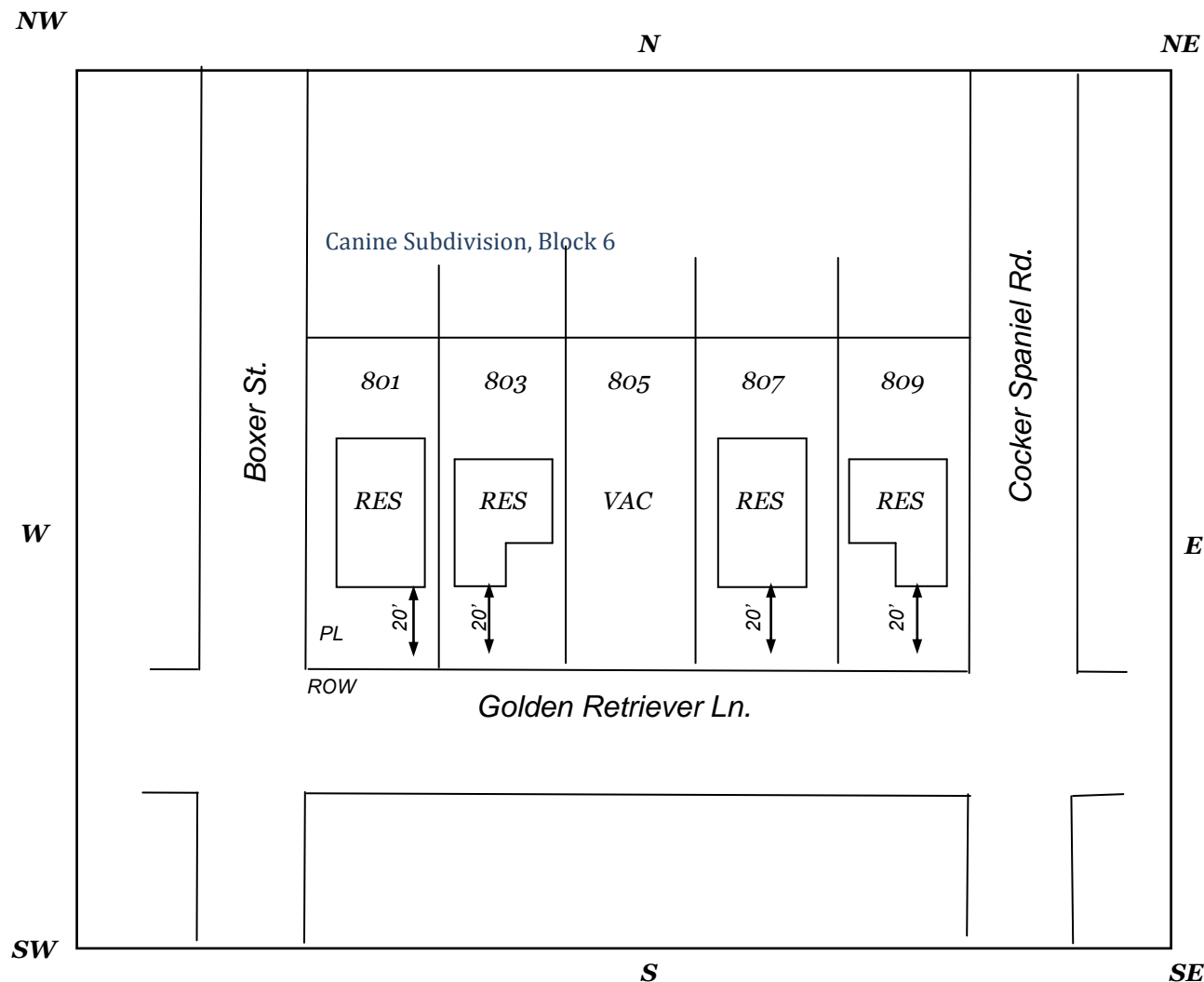
The applicant is responsible for obtaining and posting (2) signs on each blockface within the boundary of the proposed Special Minimum Building Line Block within ten (10) days of an initially completed application. The Planning and Development Department will inform the applicant of an initially completed application to post signs (see Sample Notification Sign below). The signs (minimum size: 2' x 3') shall be placed within **fifteen feet from each right-of-way (R-O-W)** bordering the area. Each sign shall face the R-O-W with print large enough to be legible from the R-O-W. The applicant is responsible for contacting Planning Staff once the signs are in place. The applicant shall use reasonable efforts to maintain the signs to the end of the process.





# Special Minimum Building Line Block

## Sample Map Sketch



The map/sketch should look similar to the drawing shown above. Please provide the address and land use for all lots within the proposed Special Building Line Block.

Information for each lot within the proposed Special Building Line Block shall be shown on the drawing that includes the distance from the front property line to each building on the lot and each lot's physical address number. If there is not enough room to include all the blockfaces and information, additional MAP/SKETCH sheets may be added to the application.